第8話
AQUA, ANGEL OF WATER

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RI...

!!
THEY'RE GOING FOR RINO!!!
THEY'RE
NOT EVEN LOOKING AT ME!!

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UWAAAGH!!!

WHY ARE THEY ATTACKING RINO NOW...!?
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WHY...!?
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NO, NO, NO, NO!!
NO...

DON'T LEAVE ME, RINO!!
DAMN THIS THING...!!!
YOU CAN'T TURN INTO AN ANGEL!!

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GAAAAAAAH!!!
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I WON'T...
LET YOU...
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I WON'T LET YOU!
TURN HER INTO AN ANGEEEE-EEELLLLL!!
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TRYING TO KILL ANOTHER ANGEL... TO KILL RINO...?
ARE YOU...
GHACK..
GUH..
NGH...

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LAY... A FINGER ON HER...
...I WON'T... LET YOU..
バシャ
HAAH..
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バシャ

THE GIRL I LOVE...
SHE'D STILL BE...
BECAUSE EVEN IF SHE TURNS INTO AN ANGEL RIGHT NOW...
SHE'D STILL BE RINO..

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WHAT... JUST HAPPENED?
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AKIRA!!
OLIVIER!
!!!
GET AWAY FROM AKIRA!!
I TAKE ONE SHORT TRIP TO TOWN AND THIS HAPPENS!?
...WELL, THEN.
WHERE SHOULD I BEGIN...?

YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T GIVE UP UNTIL YOU "FOUND A WAY TO SAVE HER"
A PITY THAT IT TURNED OUT TO BE A MOOT POINT...
THAT'S... WHAT I SAID EARLIER...!?
I'VE COME TO UNDERSTAND THE CURRENT SITUATION THROUGH WHAT THIS GIRL'S EARS PICKED UP OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS
DOES THAT MEAN YOU STILL HAVE RINO'S...!?
YOU TWO ARE LIVING MIRACLES. HUMANS WHO BEAR THE POWERS OF ANGELS AND DEMONS.
YES.

I AM NOT YOUR ENEMY.
IN ADDITION, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ONE THING CLEAR.
AQUA
YOU EXPECT US TO BELIEVE THAT!?
SHE COULD MATCH AMALDA HERSELF...!!
URGH... THAT'S A SERIOUSLY OPPRESSIVE AURA...
AKIRA!?
IF YOU'RE ON OUR SIDE... THEN FINE!

IF YOU ARE...
THEN... GIVE RINO BACK!!
...FORGIVE ME...
BUT I HAVE NO WAY OF DOING THAT AT THE MOMENT.
HOWEVER...
THERE REMAINS A METHOD TO SAVE HER!!
WHAT!?

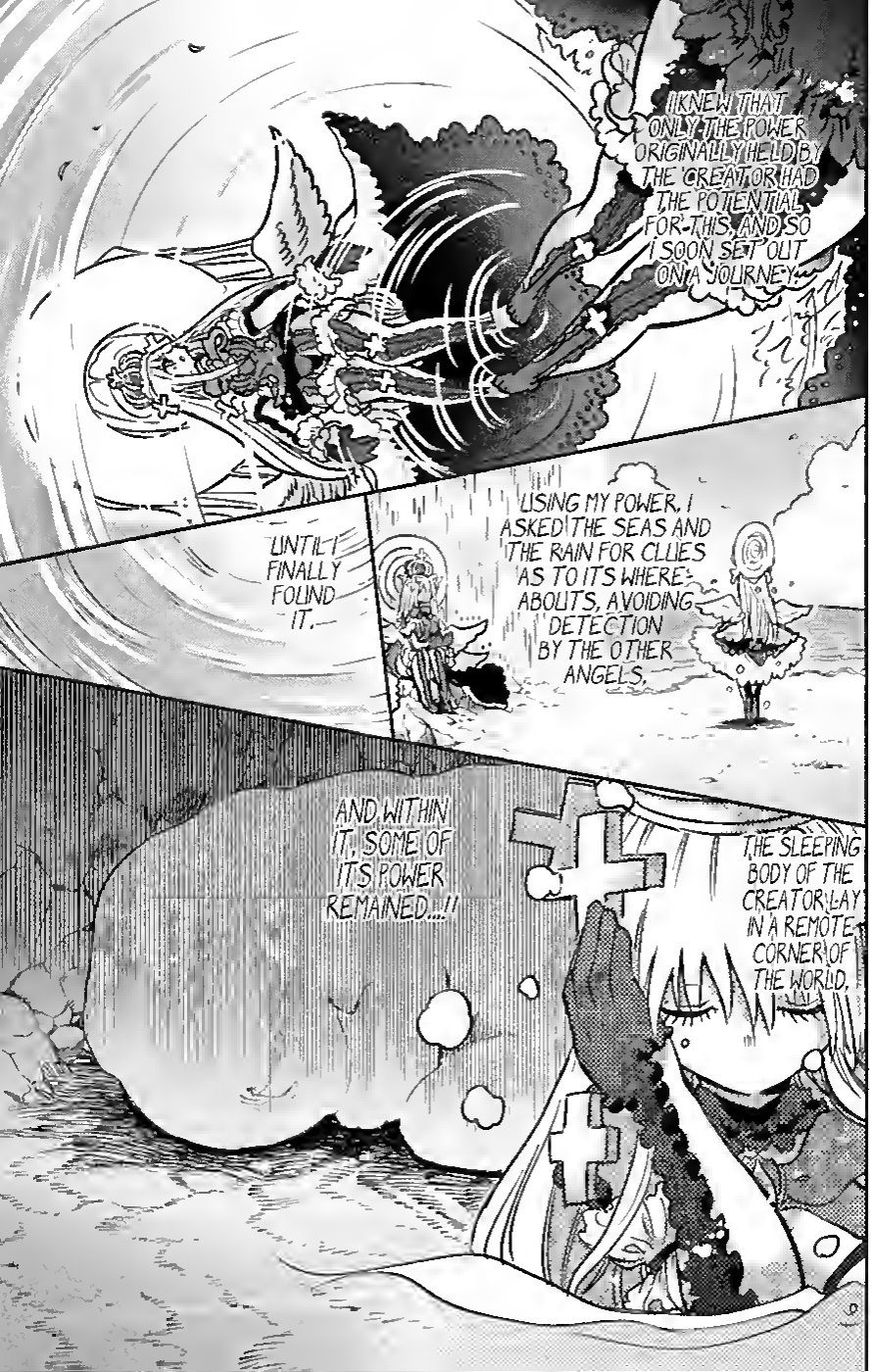
...OH.
YOU'VE BEEN BURNED.
H—HEY...
TELL ME HOW TO SAVE HER...
!
そろ…
!!
LET ME SEE YOUR OTHER WOUNDS.

MY FLUIDS HAVE HEALING PROPERTIES.
IT'S.. SLURP... ONE OF MY POWERS.
H-HOLD ON A MINUTE!!?
WHETHER OR NOT YOU TWO BELIEVE THAT I'M YOUR ALLY IS FOR YOU TO CHOOSE.
Hey, enough of that!!
BUT YOU CAN'T DENY THAT THE OTHER ANGELS WERE TARGETING ME.
THAT IS BECAUSE... I'M A TRAITOR TO THEIR CAUSE.

A... TRAITOR...?
MHMM.
MY STORY STARTS JUST AFTER THE END OF THE WAR IN CENTRAL EUROPE.
I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST ANGELS TO BE MADE AT THE ADVENT OF CREATION.
AND SHE OF THE EARTH, TERRA.
ALONG WITH SHE OF THE SKY, EA.

ONCE THE CREATOR'S WORK WAS DONE, IT SOUGHT A SECLUDED, PEACEFUL PLACE FOR ITS LIFE TO END,
AND TOLD NO ONE WHERE THAT WAS...
PERHAPS IT DID NOT TELL US WHERE IT HAD GONE BECAUSE IT BELIEVED THAT WE WOULD DO WELL TO SHEPHERD AND PROTECT ITS HUMANS.
I KNOW YOU'VE SEEN IT
THE PROOF WAS STREWN ALL OVER THE PATH YOU FOLLOWED HERE
BUT IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE THE ANGELS BEGAN TO ABUSE CREATION
THROUGH WAR AND OTHER MEANS, THEY BROUGHT THIS WORLD TO THE BRINK OF RUIN
FOR THE SAKE OF THE PURITY AND BEAUTY OF WHAT THEY WATCHED OVER,
THEY SET ABOUT WIPING DEMONKIND, THE BEARERS OF DARKNESS, FROM EXISTENCE.
THEIR ENDEAVORS CORRUPTED THEIR MINDS AND STAINED THEIR OWN HANDS.
AND OVER TIME, THEIR OBSESSION BROUGHT THEM TO CARE ABOUT NOTHING OTHER THAN THEMSELVES.

THAT IS WHAT THE ANGELS HAVE BECOME.
AND NOW, THEY ARE MACHINES DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO ERASING THE IMPURITIES THEY DEEM THEIR ENEMIES.
...IN TIME, THEY FOUND THAT THEY COULD REVIVE FALLEN ANGELS BY USING HUMANS BORN AS REVERIES, AND THE PRACTICE SPREAD.
AND EVENTUALLY, I REALIZED THAT THE PURITY GRANTED TO MY COMRADES AT THE MOMENT OF CREATION HAD BEEN LOST.
I BEGAN TO SEARCH FOR A WAY TO SAVE THE REVERIES.
AND SO...


I KNEW THAT ONLY THE POWER ORIGINALLY HELD BY THE CREATOR HAD THE POTENTIAL FOR THIS, AND SO I SOON SET OUT ON A JOURNEY...
USING MY POWER, I ASKED THE SEAS AND THE RAIN FOR CLUES AS TO ITS WHEREABOUTS, AVOIDING DETECTION BY THE OTHER ANGELS.
UNTIL I FINALLY FOUND IT.
THE SLEEPING BODY OF THE CREATOR LAY IN A REMOTE CORNER OF THE WORLD.
AND WITHIN IT, SOME OF ITS POWER REMAINED...!!

THERE'S A WAY TO SAVE THEM...
SO IT...
IT DOES EXIST!?
TO TURN RINO AND EVERYONE ELSE BACK!?
YES.
BARELY ANY OF ITS POWER IS LEFT, BUT WITH IT, ONE CAN MORE OR LESS INHERIT THE ROLE OF THE CREATOR.
I CONJECTURE THAT BY USING ALL OF THAT POWER, YOU COULD RETURN THE REVERIES TO THEIR ORIGINAL BODIES.
AND AFTER THAT, THE WARPED ORDER OF THIS WORLD AS WELL...

I IMAGINE THAT IN REVIVING ME, THEIR PLAN WAS TO EXTRACT THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE CREATOR'S BODY FROM ME.
THE OTHER ANGELS CAUGHT ME BEFORE I COULD REACH IT AND KILLED ME, IRONICALLY RETURNING ME TO LIFE WITHIN THE FLESH OF THIS GIRL.
BUT I ABSOLUTELY CANNOT ALLOW THEM TO HAVE IT!!
AKIRA... OLIVIER... I MUST BEG YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

LET US SAVE ALL OF THE PEOPLE USED AS VESSELS BY THE ANGELS!
PLEASE, COME WITH ME TO WHERE THE CREATOR RESTS.
I SWEAR TO YOU... I WILL RETURN THIS BODY TO ITS OWNER, AND SHE WILL BE WITH YOU ONCE AGAIN!
WHAT'S...
YOUR NAME?

I AM AQUA.
AQUA... THE ANGEL OF WATER.
AQU
OKAY, AQUA. WHERE DO WE HEAD FROM HERE?
NORTH
WE'LL NEED TO BREAK THROUGH THAT CHECKPOINT.
THE CHECK-POINT!?
...I JUST SCOUTED THAT AREA OUT...
WHAT'S WRONG, OLIVIER?

AND SITTING RIGHT THERE...
WAS AMALDA.